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is some continuity over a period of years, the Rara or Chariopie band remaining more or less intact. Normally it has a *mait'* Rara, also called *major* or *président*, who assumes the organizational responsibilities for the group. This means getting new costumes for the participants when required, refurbishing the old costumes and musical instruments, and recruiting special talent—perhaps a new “king.” Where the same group continues from year to year, the *mait'* Rara actually serves as a sort of executive secretary. In some instances, however, the initiative for forming a group is undertaken by the *mait'* Rara himself. He chooses the costumes and *décor* of the group; he recruits the musicians and the young women and girls who form the singing and dancing chorus; and he chooses the *roi* Lwalwadi, who will be the group's main feature. He may decide upon the theme around which the group will be built, and may even decide upon the repertoire of songs it will sing. The *mait'* Rara has specific responsibilities and is obligated to provide his band with refreshments and food.

Expenses of the group are defrayed by collections made in the course of its “exercises.” The band will stop before a crowd of spectators, or before a house, and will perform until it receives a gift known as *payé sorti* (pay to go) money. After receiving its *payé sorti*, the group performs an encore and then moves on. This custom of performing for gifts appears to have been known in colonial days. Eugène Aubin notes that the slaves on the plantations celebrated on New Year's Day with drums and dances.⁴ At midnight they appeared before the foreman or owner of the plantation. One of the slaves would recite a speech to him, or perhaps the group would sing a song praising the master's virtues. Then, over the heads of the celebrants, a slave would extend a long bamboo pole with a beribboned basket fastened to the end. The plantation master would place his gift in the basket, after which the group would leave the house.

Some few groups do not have a “king” but are built around musical instruments or other features. However, the “king” is regarded as an old tradition. Aubin reported that the *roi* Lwalwadi dates from the time of the Emperor Soulouque in the nineteenth century. Soulouque is said to have named the first *roi* Lwalwadi in the Cul-de-Sac Plain. But there are reasons to suspect that these dancing virtuosi, by whatever name they were called, existed long before Soulouque entered the picture.

The *roi* Lwalwadi is a dancer of very special talents, and it is said that, though his title is not hereditary, his dances have been handed down within the family from *rois* of other years. Much care is given to the costume he wears. It is sometimes made of expensive satin or velvet

* [Aubin, *En Haïti*, p. 42. Cf. p. 351, Category 116. — Analyst]

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